

Western Service Area Authority

In collaboration with Montana state leadership and the Department of Public Health and Human
Services for the purpose of planning and oversight of mental health services.

EXHIBIT 3
DATE 3-6-09
HB 634

March 4, 2009

The Honorable Representative Jon Sonju
House Transportation Committee Chairperson
Montana House of Representatives
Post Office Box 200400
Helena, Montana 59620

RE: House Bill 634 (D. McAlpin)
Transportation of individuals for involuntary
commitment or treatment to state hospital.

Dear Representative Sonju:

The Western Service Area Authority (WSAA) has worked to identify the priority needs in the area of mental health services in western Montana for the past five years. Transportation issues have been in the top seven priorities for each year. Concerns around law enforcement officials transporting clients to mental health facilities is a problem often voiced by consumers.

HB 634 is fully consistent with the WSAA's priorities. HB 634 addresses needs of mental health consumers regarding sheriff's transportation to mental health facilities, including appropriate use of physical restraints, and the treatment of the individual with safety and dignity during a mental health crisis. Additionally, HB 634 clarifies the fair payment of fees, commensurate with costs for services provided by the counties.

Thank you for your time and consideration of this bill which meets one of the primary priorities of the WSAA for transportation with dignity.

Sincerely,

Alyce Anderson
WSAA Chairperson

Stacey Wheeler
WSAA Vice Chairperson

Paul Meyer
WSAA Treasurer

Denelle Pappier
WSAA Secretary

Madam chair & members of the Committee
 Mr./Ms. Chair and committee members

from Missoula
 My name is Geri Stewart and I am a board member of the WSAA and I am speaking on my own behalf as a consumer. I wish to thank you for the opportunity to present my opinion on this important bill. I strongly urge you to vote for HB 634, which is long overdue. The WSAA has seen this as a top priority problem with the public mental health system since it was formed in 2005 and continues to see transportation with dignity as a problem even after the last legislative attempt at a fix.

In any civilized society, people with mental illness should not be treated like criminals. It is humiliating and degrading to be picked up in your community by Sheriff's deputies, handcuffed, shackled and placed in a sheriff's car for a simple medical transport.

I would like to read a letter I was asked to present since the person was not able to be here today. "Our family suffered a very humiliating and traumatic experience when our oldest, gentle son was hospitalized in Missoula. He suffered a breakdown, and was on suicide watch, when it was determined that he needed more extensive care at Warm Springs. Our family was with him on the ward when two uniformed police arrived and placed our terrified son in handcuffs and shackles and took him to their vehicle. We were stunned that such a forceful means for such a gentle, fearful person was used. I pray that a more humane method will be used soon".

We must conclude that the last legislature did not intend for law enforcement to be the primary entity responsible for transportation. In fact, the law states that the Office of Public Assistance is to provide transportation for people facing commitment. The sheriff is only responsible if there is no one else to transport. This means the legislature must face funding the system it both theoretically and realistically wants to see in effect: a humane, medical transportation system which respects the individual's need for dignity while using discretion to provide the individual with safety.

Again, I am thankful for this opportunity to express my very strong feelings for this bill. Brooke's experience is very recent and she will tell you her own experience. *next*

If permitted,
 I have a letter of support for this bill from the legislative committee of the WSAA that I will hand out at this time. Please give this bill much thought and know that many people ask that you give it your approval.

If permitted, I am sorry this letter was addressed to the wrong committee,

Geri R Stewart

**Total Returns,
Income Returns, and
Capital Appreciation of
the Basic Asset Classes
(1926-1991)**

Summary Statistics of Annual Returns		the Basic Asset Classes (1926-1991)	
Series	Geometric Mean	Standard Deviation	
Common Stocks:	Total Returns	10.4%	20.8%
	Income	4.7	1.2
	Capital Appreciation	5.4	20.0
	Total Returns	12.1	35.3
Long-Term Corporate Bonds	Total Returns	5.4	8.5
	Government Bonds	4.8	8.6
	Income	5.0	2.9
	Capital Appreciation	-0.4	7.4
Intermediate-Term Government Bonds	Total Returns	5.1	5.6
	Income	4.6	3.2
	Capital Appreciation	0.3	4.1
	Total Returns	3.7	3.4
U.S. Treasury Bills		3.1	4.7
Inflation			